

## **Executive Summary**

### **Laser Weapons**

(U) The panel reviewed the state-of-the-art in high energy laser technology and, in particular, the application of this technology to the point defense requirements of the surface fleet from air attack. It concluded that the surface Navy currently has a very serious Anti-Air Warfare (AAW) problem which will become critically severe in future years as the era of low observable threats evolves.

(U) The panel reviewed the findings and recommendations in the body of the 1982 Naval Research Advisory Committee (NRAC) report on laser weapons and concurred with them. It was disappointed to learn not only that they had not been acted upon, but also that the Navy abandoned the program.

(U) The overall program cost for pursuing these recommended actions is on the order of \$50 million per year for two years leading to an informed decision to proceed to a sea trial at the end of that time. This cost is large in Research and Development (R&D) dollars, but is trivial if it leads to substantially preserving the effectiveness and survivability of the United States surface fleet. The cost of not doing so may be enormous.